

Yosemite National Park



Education and Youth Programs Overview Superintendent: Don Neubacher

Education Programs (single day, residential, multi-year)

Adopt the Class of 2016 (NPS): a multi-year program bringing the park and its resources to Yosemite gateway community students who will be graduating in 2016, the National Park Service's centennial year. This program will develop long last relationships between students and the park through a wide variety of activities inspiring ownership, stewardship, and awareness of the National Park in students' backyards. Activities will take place both inside and outside of the park.



Adventure, Risk, Challenge (ARC): a 40-day wilderness literacy and leadership immersion program for Merced County students conducted during the summer in Yosemite National Park. Academic coaching is provided to students in their home communities during the academic year with weekend activities in Yosemite focused on leadership, skill building, stewardship and community. In 2011 ARC reached almost 80 students in Yosemite.

Environmental Living Program (ELP): a residential living history program designed for students grades 4 – 5 grade utilizing the Wawona Pioneer History Center; students assume the role of historic figures and learn first-hand what it was like to be a pioneer or American Indian during the settlement of Yosemite. In 2011, ELP served 593 participants.

Fireside Storytelling (DNC): A blazing fire, good stories and a gorgeous setting lend themselves to this program in The Ahwahnee Great Lounge, offered winter and spring. Families, whether an Ahwahnee guest or just visiting, will enjoy this free pre-dinner activity as they stroll through the Great Lounge in the evenings. Attendance often exceeds 50 participants.

Gateway Expressions: an art and poetry contest celebrating and showcasing the talent of students throughout Yosemite's gateway communities. Participants will be celebrated during an official award event, with winners displayed in a prominent art venue within Yosemite. Over 100 participants submitted entries in 2011.



Junior Rangers (NPS): this program provides youth the opportunity to learn about the natural and cultural history of Yosemite National Park, participate in ranger-led programs, complete hands-on activities and provide stewardship to the park while earning a Junior Ranger badge and patch. Also available as a web based option for youth who cannot visit the park. In conjunction with Junior Rangers, **Little Cubs** is a self-guided booklet that encourages young visitors, ages 3 – 6, and their families to discover Yosemite's wonders and to earn a Little Cub button. Similar to the Junior Ranger program but modified for a younger audience. Both programs are available in English and Spanish. Just over 10,000 individuals attended ranger-led Jr. Ranger programs in

2011.

Mountain Area Ski School (MASS): This long-running gateway community program uses skiing to motivate academic success as well as good citizenship. Eligible local 5th-8th grade students learn to ski and improve their ski skills at Yosemite's Badger Pass ski area. NPS education rangers meet with MASS students every Friday throughout the winter season, introducing National Park concepts as well as winter ecology concepts. MASS serves approximately 400 students annually.

Parks As Classrooms (PAC's): a dynamic array of programs for visiting school groups grades Kindergarten - college. Delivered by NPS education rangers, programs are designed to meet state or environmental education teaching standards, while providing students with an engaging learning opportunity in the ultimate classroom. Programs are also available via SKYPE. PAC's served over 4,500 participants in 2011.

Parks in Focus (PIF): Through a partnership with the Udall Foundation which pulls together Udall Scholars and Boys and Girls Clubs across the nation, this program utilizes photography to build lasting connections between underserved youth and nature. Environmental education lessons supplement photography lessons to encourage learning, experiencing, and sharing of connections to the outdoor world. Yosemite first partnered with this program in 2010.



Project Pluton (NatureBridge): created to bring together three park schools Wawona, Yosemite Valley, and El Portal in order for students to explore the park and to learn about each other. Even though students from these schools live in close proximity to the park, many do not visit the park or have the opportunity to learn about their own backyard. In this program, 275 students enjoy hands-on learning opportunities within the park, visit areas such as Hetch Hetchy and participate in outdoor activities and explorations.

Ranger Ned's Big Adventure (DNC): Begun in 2008, this children's theatre program offers visitors an opportunity to experience the story of Yosemite in a rollicking new way! Created and performed by the Traveling Lantern Theatre Company, this fast, funny and factual interactive play is a delightful activity for families with children. In 2011, over 22,000 people participated in this program.

Wee Wild Ones (DNC): This program is tailored to visitors six and under and offered year-round. Presented in front of The Ahwahnee fireplace in the fall, winter, and spring, Wee Wild Ones moves to the outdoor amphitheaters at Yosemite Lodge at the Falls and Curry Village in the summer. Yosemite-related themes such as wildlife or geology are two of the popular topics covered. This program takes place several times a week and is 45 minutes long. In 2011 over 3,000 children were reached.

NatureBridge at Yosemite: an inquiry based environmental education program for students Kindergarten – 12 grades. Teachers work directly with staff to plan outdoor educational experiences that will meet personal and learning objectives for students. Classes are brought to Yosemite for 2 - 5 day programs. NatureBridge also provides educational opportunities for park gateway community youth and through scholarship programs. These programs served over 11,000 participants in 2011.



WildLink: This program connects Sierra wilderness to the multi-cultural population living at its doorstep. Each school year, approximately 100 culturally diverse high school students participate in wilderness backpacking expeditions in the Sierra; these WildLink students in turn impact 1100 underserved Californians annually through Wilderness Ambassador Projects.

Yosemite Leadership Program (YLP): a two-year, co-curricular program focused on providing University of California Merced undergraduate students with skills to lead, advocate for the environment, make informed ethical decisions, and create social change. These skills are developed through a variety of on-campus and outdoor activities during the school year and an internship in the park during the summer. The program reached 280 students in 2011.



Yosemite Ski Scholars (NPS): NPS education rangers work in cooperation with DNC to provide dynamic winter ecology programs for students visiting Badger Pass. Before even visiting the park, rangers meet with students in their classroom, via Skype, to set the stage for an inspiring park visit. Once at Badger Pass, rangers meet with the students in rotations to introduce a variety of park related topics based on each teacher's needs.

Internships

GeoCorps America: a collaborative program between the Geological Society of America and federal land management agencies. The much sought after Yosemite GeoCorps internship has contributed to numerous projects with the park geologist including rockfall and glacier mapping and ArcGIS analyses of talus volume. This work has led to several presentation and two publications in preparation. One intern works with the park each year.



National Council of Preservation Education (NCPE): gives graduate level students the chance to work on projects within Yosemite's historic architecture and landscape operations. NCPE interns have assisted on a number of projects including preparing Cultural Landscape Inventories, preparing National Register of Historic Places nominations, and preparing Historic Structure Reports. In 2010, Yosemite partnered with 3 interns.

Bill Lane Center for the American West Internships, Stanford University: this program provides internship opportunities for currently enrolled Stanford students. Interns work on a variety of projects within the park's museum, archives, archeology, and historic landscape and architect groups. This internship provides students with a deep connection to Yosemite's rich past so it can be preserved for the future. In 2010 the park worked with 3 interns.

Student Conservation Association (SCA): provides college interns the opportunity to live and work in the park while completing important projects such as restoration efforts, removal of non-native plants, preserving archives, providing visitor and resource protection and other hands on opportunities. The park partnered with approximately 45 interns in 2010.



professional coaching and mentorship.

Yosemite Leadership Program Summer Internship: a dynamic twelve-week internship providing 17 University of California Merced undergraduate students with valuable professional skills by placing them within divisions of the National Park Service and with Yosemite park partners. Students complete a professional applied project, take an Environmental Leadership class in which they earn college credit, and received one-on-one

Field Courses and Expeditions

Armstrong Scholars: This program brings together 12 young women, ages 15 to 18, for an empowering summer backpacking adventure in the High Sierra. This program inspires young women to reach their highest potential, develop a stronger sense of self and community, and explore their personal connection to nature. This program is managed by NatureBridge at Yosemite in honor and memory of Joie Armstrong.



Environmental Science Academy (ESA): serves 40 diverse high school students with an interest in science and provides them with an introduction to the outdoors. Students gain a deeper appreciation of science, the natural world, and a connection to stewardship. This program connects students to an academic pathway that encourage them to pursue a college education.

NatureBridge at Yosemite Summer Field Research Program: This course is structured for students 11 - 12 grade with a passion for exploration, science and adventure. Participants earn college credit through Columbia College in Sonora California by creating their own ecological research project while backpacking in the Yosemite wilderness.

Professional Development

Cooperative Ecosystem Study Unit (CESU): a cooperative agreement joining students from universities from across the country, giving them the opportunity to gain experience making conservation evaluations and recommendations in a real-world institutional setting. Students work on a variety of projects with the Yosemite museum and archives including archive cataloging and ethnographic collection condition surveys.

Robert Fore Excellence in Teaching Fellowship: weekend-long retreats at the SNRI Wawona Field Station for approximately 20 Merced Union High School District teachers a year. Curriculum is taught by UC Merced professors and Yosemite resource management staff in an effort to connect state-standards-based high school science curriculum with local Sierra Nevada ecosystems.

WildLink/NPS Bridge Program: a two-week, hands-on learning, job-shadowing experience for WildLink alumni ages 18 – 22; this program provides first hand exploration of career opportunities available within the National Park Service. The program includes interacting with park employees and a session with NPS Human Resources that walks students through the federal job application process.

Skill Building and Service Opportunities

California Conservation Corps (CCC): a program for young adults ages 18 - 25, focused on completing conservation projects such as repairing trails, infrastructure, and restoration projects.

Youth Conservation Corps (YCC): Yosemite National Park is one of only two residential YCC programs in the National Park Service and serves youth ages 15 – 18. These youth spend eight weeks living in the park restoring trails, replacing fire rings, and working on vital restoration projects.



AmeriCorps and the Sierra Nevada AmeriCorps Partnership (SNAP): works to assess and restore impaired watersheds; within Yosemite, participants have monitored impacts of informal trails in meadows and riverbank conditions along the Merced River.



Youth Volunteers in Parks: offers single day to 12-week service programs, available to youth ages 8 years old and up; serving group sizes from 5 – 50 individuals. Day program volunteers include Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, community or church groups, Yosemite Institute students and park employee families. Scouts alone contributed 747 volunteers and 4,547 hours of service in 2010. Specialized volunteer opportunities include youth programs focused on career opportunities.

Student Hiring Programs

Student Temporary Employment Program (STEP): a noncompetitive employment program for current students enrolled or accepted for enrollment as a degree-seeking student, and taking at least a half-time academic/vocational/technical course load in an accredited high school, 2 year or 4 year college or university, graduate or professional school.

Student Career Experience Program (SCEP): provides for long-term, committed, career-track work experience, which must be directly related to the student's academic field of study and career goals. Participants of the SCEP Program may be non-competitively converted to term, career-conditional, or career appointments following the successful completion of all academic and work experience requirements within a certain time limitation.



For additional information on Yosemite National Park education and youth programs, please contact Shauna Potocky, Branch Chief of Education at (209) 375-9505 or Shauna_Potocky@nps.gov.